

My name is Alvin Ashley, I live at 413 Dogleg Drive, James City County and I appear today to read a statement on behalf of the Citizens for a Better James City County, a group of concerned citizens devoted to maximizing the potential of our already outstanding community by contributing in some small measure to your task of updating the Comprehensive Plan of 2009.

Our immediate remarks will comment on some of the Board of Supervisor's announced priorities, which we believe are essential to the continued evolution of James City County as a first-rate community in which to live and work.

Land Use:

Our initial examination affirms our belief that the overwhelming majority of our population desires to control growth so that we maintain the character of this historically significant county. To accomplish this we reaffirm the concept of the Primary Service Area ("PSA") "as the overall framework for the County's growth" as enunciated in the present Comprehensive Plan (p.128) and recommend that the updated Comprehensive Plan maintain the PSA within its current boundaries.

Over the next five years, areas of concern such as schools (a fourth middle school, capital maintenance, and bus replacement) and meeting storm water mandates will limit to a large extent, if not entirely, our ability to build required infrastructure in a fiscally sound manner, which would be required if the PSA is expanded.

We urge the Board of Supervisors:

- 1- Not to approve any expansion of the PSA until we near build-out on lots the county has already approved. Even with this constraint we can easily maintain a healthy rate of growth for many years to come, before approving any expansion of the PSA.
- 2- Include the board's policy on controlling growth in the introduction to the updated Comprehensive Plan to allay any fears citizens may have concerning inconsistencies between the Comprehensive Plan and Board actions.

Economic Development:

Economic Opportunity Zones are a recognized means to foster economic growth, a means to broaden land use, and increase employment within a designated area. We believe such zones would be beneficial to our county. However, largely for the same financial and economic limitations we face in the ensuing five years, as set forth above, we believe that the county should limit Economic Opportunity land use, at least for that period of time, to areas within the PSA and that it specifically designate such land for that purpose.

We ask you to seriously consider in your deliberations examining all commercially/industrially designated land within the PSA for conversion to EO status. The re-designation of some of that land would indicate that we are serious about expanding economic development in this county.

Transportation:

Resources for road construction and maintenance will remain severely limited for some time so we should deal with our current and pending problem areas before taking on new projects. We see them as follows:

Short Term- the widening and improvement of Longhill Road;
Intermediate Term- the widening of Route 60 in the southern part of the county; and,
Long Term- general improvements of Route 60 in the northern part of the county.

The county should monitor carefully expansion of Interstate 64 and exert pressure on VDOT to the extent possible to assure that the bottleneck which will be inevitable under the present plan to widen the road in stages occur in the north end of James City County not the south end as presently seems likely.

Environment

Compliance with the requirements to obtain storm water pollution permits will challenge the county's finances over the next 15 years. We urge the adoption of a 15-year storm water facility management plan to help guide the development of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget. Currently, only James City Service Authority and Parks and Recreation have facility management plans. Such a plan for storm water would also provide the means of measuring the adequacy of funding and the accomplishment of strategies and actions. Since state law requires the Comprehensive Plan to include study of existing conditions and probable future requirements in the county this area is well within the purview of the Community Participation Team.

Finally, we suggest that all goals, strategies, and actions in the updated Comprehensive Plan be more objective with measurable standards so our citizens can judge performance. We believe the plan should express goals in general terms, describe strategies and actions in specific terms clearly articulating a methodology of performance to accomplish them, and eliminate vague terms such as "promote," "encourage," "consider," and "continue" replacing them with more precise and descriptive ones.

All of the above will make the updated Comprehensive Plan more meaningful and useful to the average citizen.

I thank you on behalf of the Citizens for a Better James City County for allowing us to appear and express our views.